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LETTER DATED 23 JULY 1993 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ARMENIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to forward to you enclosed herewith the statement issued today by Mr. Karen Baburian, President of the Presidium of the Parliament of Nagorny Karabakh.

I should be grateful if you would circulate this statement as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Alexander ARZOUMANIAN
Permanent Representative

Annex

Statement by Mr. Karen Baburian, President of the Presidium of the Parliament of the Republic of Nagorny Karabakh, on 23 July 1993

In recent days, Azerbaijan has undertaken repeated offensive military operations on the eastern frontiers of the Republic of Nagorny Karabakh, despite the assurances of the present leaders of Azerbaijan regarding their commitment to the peaceful resolution of the Nagorny Karabakh conflict and the efforts of the international community to bring about an end to the hostilities.

Simultaneously, the news propagated by Azerbaijan has attempted to represent the retaliatory actions of the Nagorny Karabakh Republic's Self-Defense Forces as manifestations of aggression by Nagorny Karabakh. The leadership of Azerbaijan, in trying to cover up its lack of complete control over its armed forces, asserts that it has not initiated any military operations.

The scale of military operation, including shelling by long-range artillery rockets launched against the capital of Stepanakert - especially during the past three days - air strikes of Askeran, and surrounding villages by Azerbaijani military aviation testify that these operations have been coordinated and purposeful. The scope of offensive operations initiated by Azerbaijan can be ascertained by the fact that on 22 July alone, two combat helicopters and one SU-25 attack plane of the Azerbaijani air force were shot down over the skies of Nagorny Karabakh. During the same day, two T-72 and one BMP-2 tanks, attempting to reach Nagorny Karabakh Republic's defense lines, were destroyed by mines on the Aghdam-Askeran road. Two other tanks were neutralized and captured during recent fighting.

The international community would have difficulty in agreeing that the authorities in Baku have complete control of Azerbaijani armed forces, if these military operations have been undertaken without the approval of these authorities.

In order to increase mutual trust, to provide mechanisms for the assessment of the flow of information regarding military operations, and to enable the parties to adopt effective measures for the prevention of such military operations, it is necessary to establish direct contacts between the authorities of the Republic of Nagorny Karabakh and the Republic of Azerbaijan. Such contacts would at the same time contribute to the successes of the CSCE peacemaking mission and the establishment of a cease-fire.

We would like to stress that we have often made appeals for the establishment of direct talks, without much success. In addition, the Azerbaijani side has violated the 17 June agreement mediated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, which precluded the shelling of Aghdam and Stepanakert and prevented the development of that initiative into a cease-fire agreement covering the regions of Aghdam and Askeran. This constitutes indisputable proof of Azerbaijan's aggressive intentions, which were confirmed by the intensification of military operations during the following few days.

We reconfirm our readiness to conduct direct negotiations with Azerbaijan under the aegis of the CSCE and we hoped that this appeal will be appreciated in Baku and will have a positive response.